

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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BAUER: HOUSE DEMO PLAN PROVES NEW COLTS STADIUM CAN BE BUILT WITHOUT TAX HIKE

INDIANAPOLIS – In the wake of an Indiana House Republican plan calling for massive local tax increases to pay for a new stadium for the Indianapolis Colts, House Democrat Leader B. Patrick Bauer (D-South Bend) offered reminders that his caucus has offered a proposal to build the facility that does not require tax hikes.

Bauer said the House Republican plan, offered by Ways and Means Chairman Jeffrey Espich (R-Uniondale), would force Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson and the Indianapolis/Marion County City-County Council to enact a series of substantial tax increases to pay for the new stadium, as well as an expansion of the Indiana Convention Center.

"There is no need to ask the people of Indianapolis to pay large tax increases when House Democrats have offered an alternative funding proposal that would pay for construction of a new stadium, expand the convention center, provide added support for public education and Medicaid and help support our state's horse tracks, all without raising any local taxes," Bauer said.

The House Democrat plan calls for bringing 2,500 slot machines to a new off-track satellite facility at an undetermined location outside of the downtown Indianapolis area.

"Revenue from these machines will be used to provide \$50 million up front to start construction on a new stadium, \$46 million in ongoing funding to help build the stadium, \$75 million for schools and \$50 million to help finance Medicaid programs," Bauer said. "In all, it will generate more than \$213 million in revenue in both the 2007 and 2008 Fiscal Years.

"Compare this proposal with a plan offered by Rep. Espich, which calls for a new income tax and huge increases in the food and beverage, innkeeper's and auto rental excise taxes," he continued. "If this proposal becomes law, it would give Indianapolis the highest hotel taxes in the nation. How would such a move help the city attract more conventions to Indiana?"

Bauer said Espich's plan would put a serious roadblock in front of development efforts in the state's largest city at a time when economic growth is identified as the top priority for the Daniels administration.

"The people of Indianapolis do not have to have tax increases forced on them in order to keep the Colts in Indiana," Bauer said. "House Democrats have a plan that will help them, and benefit education and health care as well. We believe our plan works and we intend to fight for its passage in the weeks to come."